

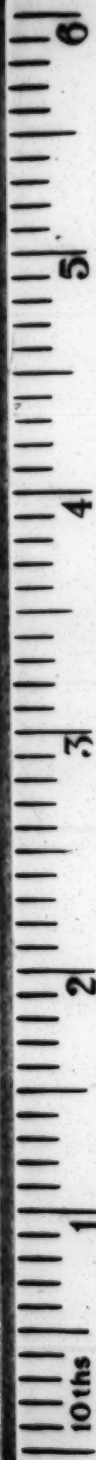
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A  
SERMON  
OF THE  
Education  
OF  
CHILDREN

By *Alexander Jephson*, A. M. and  
Master of the Free School in ~~Rat~~  
~~cliffe, London~~ *Camden, Surrey*.

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By J. J. J. J. J. M. and  
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Prov. XXIX. 15.

*The rod and reproof give  
Wisdom; but a Child  
left to himself, bringeth  
his Mother to Shame.*

*The naturalist*

**P**HILOSOPHERS compare  
the mind of a Child to a *Rasa  
Tabula*, a Sheet of clean Paper,  
upon which you may write ei-  
ther fair and Legible Characters, or  
stain and pollute it with Blots; which  
you may either fill with wholesome and  
Godly Instructions, or with Lewd and  
*Obscene Ribauldry*. Some also very apt-  
ly liken it to soft wax, upon which you  
may make what impression you please,

it being, when Newly melted, Equally capable of receiveing the Figure of a Dove or a Vulture, a Saint or a Devil.

SO the mind of man, when it is Young and tender, may be seasoned and imbued with piety and Vertue, or for want of such Institution, vice and Immorality will soon Crowd themselves in. For as a rich Soil, if left uncultivated and untilled, brings forth nothing but rank and Noisome weeds; so what can be expected from One, whose active mind has never been Instructed with Religious precepts, but dangerous and unruly passions, Monstrous and enormous vices?

It behoves Parents therefore to use Diligence in sowing the Seeds of Vertue betimes in their Children, before Malice, Selflove, or corrupt conversation and example deprave their minds and actions. And indeed a fair Superstructure may be easily raised, and a Noble Fabrick may be soon erected

erected, when a sound and Solid Foundation has been first laid. In order therefore to the obtaining of Vertue, and arriving at wisdom, *Solomon* in his short, but pithy Proverbs, has laid down Several excellent Rules for all Parents and Tutorsto, walk by in the Education their Children. For having observed the Foolish overfondness of some Parents, and the ill Effects it had on their Childrens manners; He admonishes them to use all Possible meansto restrain their Extravagancies; and lest they shou'd miss of the most proper expedient to work such a cure, and to prevent the like Mischiefs for the Future, He Scatters several wholesome precepts in this Book of *Proverbs*; and 'Twill not be amiss to collect some of the chief of them; Especially those that are most pertinent to the matter we have now under Consideration.

S E E Prov. 13. 24. *He that spareth the Rod hateth his Son: but He that Loveth him Chaſteneth him betimes.*  
*And*

*And 19. 18. Chasten thy Son while there is hope, and let not thy Soul spare for his crying. And 22. 15. Foolishness is bound in the Heart of a Child, but the rod of Correction shall drive it far from Him. And 23. 13. 14. Withhold not Correction from the Child, for if thou beatest Him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with a rod, and shalt deliver his Soul from Hell. And last of all in the words of the Text, The rod and reproof give Wisdom, but a Child left to himself bringeth his Mother to Shame.*

BY wisdom here King Solomon mean's all those pious Institutions, wherein we ought to bring up, and educate our Children; with which if they are throwly Tinctured and Imbued, when they grow up to *Maturity*, they will not depart from them. Wisdom, tis true, is the gift of God, as *Solomon* well knew, when He prefer'd it before Riches and long Life; yet God often makes use of Second causes

causes and Instruments to convey his Blessings and Benefits to us. And *the Rod and reproof* are the properest means in *Solomons* Judgment to bring Children to *Wisdom*.

In discoursing on which *Aphorism*, I shall follow this Method.

- I. I shall shew, *that the Rod and reproof* are not an absolute Condition, without which Learning and *Wisdom* cannot be attained unto.
- II. I shall examine in what cases, *the Rod and reproof* are Necessary Instruments, and means to forward Children in Learning, and to Rectifie their Manners.
- III. I shall consider the Folly of those Parents, who out of a too fond Indulgence Neglect, to use *the Rod and reproof*, when they see their Children pursue Irregular and evil courses.

IV. I



IV. I shall lay down the advantages of an early, Sober, and Pious Education. Of these in their order.

I. I shall shew *That the Rod and reproof* art not an absolute Condition, without which Learning and Wisdom cannot be attained unto. For ( 1<sup>st</sup>. ) many Children are naturally so Flexible and docile so Ingenious and Industrious, and of so meek and mild a Disposition, that they will do all that lies in their Power to advance themselves in all commendable Qualifications, and endowments, without putting their Parents, and Tutors to the ungrateful trouble of using Severity. A good will and dilligent Inclinations withall, like the Conjunction of two Lucky Planets, are certain presages of an happy Progress in Learning. Upon a Youth thus disposed, a Frown may work more than a Whipping upon another. The *Rod and reproof* wou'd quite bawk, if not ruine such an one; this woud be like Spurring a free Horse;

or Towing a Ship, that under all her Sails drove before the wind.

The Lady *Jane Gray*, whom *Q. Mary* beheaded, and who was the Mirour of her age and Sex for Latin and Greek Literature, accounted it one of the greatest Blessings, that Heaven ever bestowed on her, to wit, that tho' she had Sharp and severe Parents, yet she had a Gentle and mild Tutor, who by his winning Commendations, and Encouragements, made her take delight in Nothing so much, as in her Studies.

IF therefore it be unreasonable to use *the Rod and reproof*, to a Youth of this happy Genius, to one that has excellent parts, and is also very dilligent and Industrious, so ( *2ly.* ) 'Tis no less Culpable to use Severity to one that is Studious and willing to Learn, Tho' He has not a good Memory, or a ripe Judgment. For when such a Lad has done all his endeavour, and used his utmost dilligence, if then the

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Mas-

Master, thro' peevishness, or Inconsiderateness of such Circumstances, uses *the Rod and reproof* ; and because a poor boy cannot expound every difficulty, and unravel every Knotty sentence He meets with as exactly as other pert Lads, I say, if the Master in this case uses Sharpness and Austerity, He makes the Scholar quite despair of ever Learning, and, by Consequence puts him out of Love with his Book, as a thing Impossible for him ever to attain unto. 'Tis no wonder then if Children hate the *Muses*, when they are only represented in the Shapes of *Fiends and Furies*. 'Tis no wonder, if that man hates Hunting, who is always sent supperless to bed, when he brings home no Venison along with him. This is very unreasonable, and 'tis no less so to Chide and reprimand one, that has done his endeavour to compass his Lesson, tho' without the Wished-for Success. If He has sweat and Labour'd more than others, he deserves equal encomiums with the most ingenious of his Class.

( II )

For indeed a Rod may Spoil a good Genius, but will never amend the defaults of nature. And we may but too justly say, that a General severity of Discipline, without attending to the nature or prying into the Genius of Boys, has dishearten'd many a Youth, and Blasted many a fair Blossom, which if Cherished and improved, till they came to Maturity, wou'd have proved most Excellent fruit. We shou'd account him a very Sorry unskillful Gardener, or rather Madman, who wou'd hack, and hew, and Tear up by the Roots all those Trees, whose Fruit was Sowr, and unripe in Summer; and wou'd not have Patience to wait till the Autumne their proper Season, or thro' Ignorance knew not, that the most lasting Fruit was longest a ripening.

Tis said of the Famous Cowley, that tho' his Judgment was great, when he was a Boy, yet his memory was Slow; and therefore he cou'd never

give any tollerable account of the Grammar Rules. However by his own private observations, which were to him Instead of Rules, he arrived to a great excellency in the Latin and Greek Tongues. What an Excellent Poet had his Master perhaps deprived the world of, had he been so peevish, or asserted his Prerogative so far, as to juggle Him out of his own By-path, and lash him into the common Road.

I my self have experienced this matter in some Lads, but more particularly in One, who Drudged, and Toiled at the Oar for near two Years, without making any Tollerable Progress; But when once his Eyes were opened, and he understood which way he was to go, he so bestirred Himself, that He soon outstripped many others, who were got almost out of sight before him, and went from School with as great applause as any Lad ever did. New Wine the stronger body it has, is Generally Subject to the more Lees, but when

when it is fined and Clarify'd by  
age, and the Feculent particles are  
Sunk, such Wine is the best. So, ma-  
ny poor Lads are Muddy-headed, and  
dull at *First*, but when onct they have  
dispelled those Vapours from the Brain,  
they afterwards prove most excellent  
Scholars. *Aquinas* in his Youth, was  
called the Dumb-Ox ; but when he  
grew up to be a Man, he Bellowed so  
Lowd, that all the world heard him.  
*Solomon* never intended, that the *Rod*  
and *reproof* shou'd be exercis'd to give  
Wisdom to such : But

*Secondly*, As a dilligent and Studious  
Boy, tho of a mean Capacity, ought not  
to be discouraged, or forced and dri-  
ven faster than nature will allow ; so  
there are some, who will stand in need  
of the *Rod and reproof* to forward them  
in their Learning, and to rectify them  
in their Manners ; and therefore I  
shall Examin in what cases the *Rod*  
and *reproof* are absolutely necessary.  
Such Lads as these which I just now  
men-



mentioned, can go very well when sleep  
 they please, and can sometimes get the  
 Start of many others; yet in General these  
 they are so addicted to Idleness, so in  
 Love with their nutts and Toys, that  
 they spend most of their time on them,  
 and Neglect their Learning; and think  
 themselves happy enough, if they can  
 but Slubber over their Lesson in any  
 Fashion so as to come off without Pun-  
 ishment: Such *Birds* as these, that can  
 Sing, and won't, must be made to Sing  
 These must be egged forward by the  
 Rod and reproof, or they will never at-  
 tain unto *Wisdom*. These like a true  
 Mettled Horse will bear, and go very  
 well with the Spurr.

Nay sometimes they are so overcon-  
 ceited, and presume so much on the  
 quickness, and acuteness of their own  
 parts, that they Loiter away their  
 time; and like the Hare in the Fable,  
 being to run only with Snails ( as they  
 account some of their Classe-Fellows )  
 they take large Circles, and play, and  
 Sleep

sleep ; and so let every Dunce come  
 to the Goal before them. Such as  
 these, if seasonably refined by the Rod  
 and reproof will in time become Gol-  
 den boys ; and indeed nothing but the  
 Rod and reproof will give Wisdom to such.  
 Correct such Lads as these, and they shall  
 give delight unto thy Soul. Prov. 29. 17.

The son of Sirach, is very positive to  
 this purpose in the 30 Cap. Ecclus. 1. 2.  
 He that Loveth his Son ( such a Son  
 as these last mention'd ) causeth him oft  
 to feel the Rod, that he may have joy of  
 him in the end. He that Chastiseth his  
 Son shall have joy in him, and shall re-  
 joyce of him among his acquaintance. And  
 in the 7, 8, 9, 10, 12. and 13. Verses  
 of the same Chap. He goes on to shew  
 how Prejudicial 'tis to Youth to go on  
 in their Follies without Correction. He  
 that maketh too much of his Son, shall  
 bind up his wounds, and his Bowels shall  
 be troubled at every cry. An Horse not  
 broken becometh headstrong, and a Child  
 left to himself will be wilful. Cocker thy  
 Child and he shall make thee afraid, Play  
 with

with him, and he shall bring thee to Heaviness. Laugh not with him, lest thou have Sorrow with him, and lest thou gnash thy Teeth in the end. Give him no Liberty in his Youth, and wink not at his Follies. Bow down his neck while he is Young and beat him on the Sides, while he is a Child, lest he wax Stubborn, and be disobedient unto thee, and so bring Sorrow to thine heart. Chastise thy Son and hold him to labour, lest his Lewd Behaviour be an offence to thee. And all these proofs might be sufficient

Thirdly To expose the Folly of those Parents, who, out of a too fond Indulgence, Neglect to use the Rod and reproof, when they see their Children pursue vice and Immorality. But I should beg leave to expatiate a little on this Consideration, it being generally the Parents faults, that Children do so often Miscarry, for want of due, and timely Correction. And this Folly will appear more Manifestly, when we reflect on those many Instances which every day affords us. How Indolently and fatigably

Heavily do men Labour, how Industrious are they to enlarge their Estates, and to provide vast Fortunes for their Children, in order to an happy disposal of them in the world ; and thus far they are to be commended. Nay the Apostle wou'd account them no better than Infidels if they did not do so ; As long as they kept within the Bounds of Justice to their Neighbour, and withheld not that Charity and relief that is due to the poor. But alas what's the Advantage of all this hurry ! If they Neglect their Childrens Souls, and for want of the Rod and reproof suffer them to run headlong into Eternal perdition, these large Fortunes and Estates are the Victim for the Sacrifice. I say, if Parents have not taken care to have the first Principles of Religion Instilled sometimes into their minds, and by due correction, put a restraint upon the Extravagancies of their Youths, and bridled and curbed them in their Inclinations ; if they have Seldom or never put them in mind of their Baptismal

C

Vow,

Vow, and the Heinous sin of violating it ; if they have not taught them the Catechism in their early days, nor trained them up in the way they shou'd go ; but on the Contrary Cherished them in Ignorance of their duty encouraged them in sloth and Idleness and added Fuel to their youthful Flames, by supplying them with Money to support, and carry on their enormous lusts and Follies ; I say, if Parents have been careless in these particulars, what signifies all this carking and careing to provide splendid Fortune for them ? what signify Riches and Honours and Worldly Glory, to a Vicious man ? They only give him the greater opportunities of evil ; and his plenty will be like high feeding of an ill managed Horse, which makes him become more dangerous to the Rider.

And, indeed, how can such Parents hope to reap the least comfort from their Children, when they are grown up to be men, who have made sinful Courses so Habitual and Customary



to them, that it is as easy for the *Ethiopian*, to wash himself white, and for the *Leopard*, to Change his spots, as for them to look back, and retract their Follies, and put a stop to their wild Excursions. Such Children, as these, when they Consider, that their Parents have been the chief cause of all this evil, will make bitter Reflections against them, and have reason to do so; nay to disown them, and refuse to pay that Filial respect and Duty, that was otherwise due to them for being so Doatingly foolish, and for *Sparing the Rod* out of an absurd Fondness, which by its Consequences demonstrated more hatred in reality, than the worst of their Enemies could have wished them.

What signifies it, that a Boy be the Mothers Darling, the very delight of her Eyes, and joy of her Heart, that every petty action of his Youth is Idolized and admired by her partial Judgment, as presaging some great wit, and ex-

cellent endowments, and Qualifications of the mind; Perhaps an indifferent un-bias'd eye, sees not the least grounds for such vast hopes. What signifies it that the fond Mother foresees the profound statesman, the grave Senator, the Learned Divine, or the judicious Lawyer in her beloved Son, if her too much Indulgence Bawks, and stifles this happy Genius in its Infancy, by Neglecting the Rod and reproof, when he grows Refractory, and refuses to learn and *Wisdom*. What if he be as Beautiful as his *Abalom*, if he have the same proud haughty Spirit of Rebellion; his amiable Boyishness without Vertue and Godliness to Balance it, makes his Folly and perverseness but the more conspicuous. What if he have the Policy of *Abithophel*, and if his Impatience for being thwarted and contradicted in his opinion, hurry him on to the same desperate Fate.

But I am aware these tender Mothers will speak a good word, and plead for their poor Children, and acknowledge

judge the Barbarity of Chastiseing  
 them; for who can withstand the  
 deuteous Complaints of a Beloved Child, or  
 refuse him pardon upon his humble  
 supplication? who can bear the cry  
 of a poor Boy, whilst he is under Cor-  
 rection? Who can have the heart to see  
 his tender Skin Furrowed with Stripes,  
 and not rather Suffer him to persist in his  
 Childish Follies. What great harm  
 is there in swearing a little Oath now  
 and then, whilst he's contending with  
 his Play-fellows about his Nutts and  
 rattles? What great matter is it for a  
 Boy to tell a little lye, or to steal a few  
 Apples, or to play the Truant, or to  
 vent his Passion in a curse or two on  
 those that offend him? These tricks  
 and Follies are commonly incident to  
 Youth, and he'll know better things  
 when he comes to Maturity, and his  
 Judgment is more ripe and Solid.  
 These are the excuses that are com-  
 monly Suggested by the fond Mo-  
 thers.

But

But I wou'd beg of them to consider, that we have seen some, who being much addicted to Gameing when they were Boys, could not refrain, when they were Men, till perhaps the loss of their Estates put a stop to their Career. Some, who as often as the freak took them, wou'd roam abroad and Ramble from School, and doubted not of Pardon by their Mothers Intercession: yet this gadding Humour forsook them not, when they were Men; and they cou'd no more confine themselves to their shops, and Employments, than they cou'd formerly to the School. Some that delighted in Robbing of Orchards and pilfering Fruit, that afterwards when they were reduced to Poverty try'd their skill in other greater matters. The Boy in the Fable, who receiv'd no Correction from his Mother for Stealing an Horn-book, went on still, and play'd the Thief, till he was apprehended: who as he was lead to Execution, called for his Mother and pretending to whisper some thing in her

her ear, he bitt it off, and Vindicated the doing so, with this just exprobration of her Folly. *Mother* (said he) *if you had Whipped me for Stealing the horn-Book, I had not come to this Shamefull, and dismal end.*

If all these Instances will have no Influence on the fond Mothers, let them Consider also, that the Wise *K. Solomon*, who knew better than they how Youth ought to be Educated, tells them plainly in the Text, that without *the Rod and reproof such a Child as this will bring his Mother to Shame*, and that withholding Correction, and *Sparing the Rod* is indeed but *Hating the Child*, whatever the Mother in her mistaken tenderness may pretend.

*An putas te amare Filium, quando eum non corripis?  
Non est ista charitas, sed Languor. Aug.*

If a Child be sick of some Dangerous distemper, we shou'd account that Mother little better than mad, who  
wou'd



wou'd refuse to give him a bitter potion, for fear of displeasing him ; Every Neighbour wou'd cry out shame, and tell her that this was not Loving, but Hating her Child ; and they would be apt to infer, that certainly she did privately wish the death of such a Child, to whom she wou'd give no uneasiness, tho' to recover his Health.

And in the other case, the Mothers hatred will Manifest it self but too evidently, when the man cannot forbear, or refrain from those sinfull habits, which he contracted in his Youth, and that the older he grows, his sins have taken the deeper Root. And the Mother her self begins to see her own Folly, when she finds her Darling so Headstrong, that 'tis Next to Impossible for her to Reclaim him ; and that for all her fondness, and Cockering of him in his Youth, he will not now for her sake Relinquish one Sin. She'l then think it very unkind, and unnatural, that Her Son, Her Beloved Son will

ti- not bawke one Extravagancy tho' his  
 e- Mother begs it of him with Tears in  
 e- her eyes ; that Mother whose Bowells  
 g- Tern'd upon him, as *Josephs* did upon  
 ld- his Brother *Benjamin* ; that Mother  
 id- who cou'd never refuse to comply with  
 d- his Youthfull requests. And these are  
 fs- not only bare Surmises of mine, but e-  
 very day affords too many Instances of  
 those, who have been the Beloved  
 rs- Children, whose sight filled their Mo-  
 ri- thers hearts with joy ; who were so  
 ar- pamper'd and carested, that their Mas-  
 a- ters were not permitted so much as to  
 h- frown upon, much less to Correct  
 ns- them ; and yet these Fondlings have  
 he- proved the most undutiful of all their  
 yn- Children ; nay have Flown in the very  
 so- Face of their Parents, when at length  
 fi- they were convinced of the Necessity  
 at- there was to Correct and reprimand  
 of- them for their untowardlines. These  
 or- commonly are like wanton Colts, they  
 en- turn Tail and Kick at the dugg from  
 al- whence they Sucked that Nourishment  
 ill- which made them so Stubborn and per-  
 ot- verse.

St. Gregory tells us of one with whom, he says, he was intimately acquainted; This man had a Son, to whom he was too Indulgent, when any thing Crossed or vext this Young man, he wou'd curse, and Blaspheme most horridly, yet his Father never Corrected him for it. At length he fell sick, and died Blaspheming in his Fathers arms, and the Devil was feared to carry him away. And I think the Father himself had great reason to dream the like Fate for his supineness, and Follie in not using *the Rod and reproof* to break his reprobate Son of this Impiety.

Let us all have a diligent Circumspection over the Behaviour of our Children, especially while they are Young and tender, to keep them from Swearing, lying, Pilfering, or any other vice. We may easily bend a young Plant, but we shall as soon break a grown Tree as Straiten it. Let us have a care of them while they are Young.

young, lest we and they repent, when  
it will be too late.

And, Alas ! How will these fond  
Mothers excuse their Neglect at the  
great Tribunal, were they shall see the  
fatal effects of their too great Indul-  
gence. Where they shall see their  
Pearlings hurried away to Eternal  
tortures, and Dragg'd Head-long by  
merciful Fiends into the Lake that  
burns with Fire and Brimstone ; where  
there will be none to pity or shew  
compassion ; where there will be no  
relaxation of their anguish and pain ;  
where Instead of a few Moderate  
stripes, Instead of *the Rod and reproof*,  
they shall be lashed and torn with the  
most severe Scorpions, and fryed in un-  
quenchable Flames ; where they shall  
groan and lament and Languish to E-  
ternity, without any one to fondle, or  
reach, or lick up their Tears.

Consider this all you too fond Mo-  
thers, and let not your poor Children

perish Eternally for want of a little  
 Temporal Correction, but Straitem  
 and Mold them, while they are soft  
 and Young; which will be a greater  
 Demonstration of your Love, than  
 for fear of Hurting them, you let them  
 grow Crooked and awry till they  
 come to maturity, which enormity  
 you cannot then, without great diffi-  
 culty, redress and amend.

If we have a piece of Ground, we  
 will bestow some cost and Labour in  
 Manuring it; if we have a Young  
 Horse, we will not Grudge a littleness  
 charge and Pains to break him, and  
 bring him to all his paces. And can  
 we be so Barbarous, as to Neglect our  
 Children, those dear Pledges of God's  
 Love, Psal. 127. 3. *Children are the*  
*Inheritance of the Lord, and the Fruit of*  
*the Womb is his reward*; and can we  
 make no kinder a Retaliation of God's  
 Favours? can we despise and have  
 little Value for such Precious gifts,  
 to refuse to give them Education, and



to instruct them in Religion and Vertue? And can we be so far Infatuated, as to Neglect giving them Correction for their faults, when the wise King tells us in the Text, *That the Rod and reproof give Wisdom, and that a Child thus left to himself shall bring us to Shame.* *Yaboth* would not part with the Inheritance of his Fathers, but with his life, tho' he was Civily entreated, and earnestly Sollicited and Courted, nor if by his King. Children are an inheritance given unto us by God, and shall we by our supineness, and Fondness, and Neglect of Exercising the *Rod and reproof* give them to the Devil? *God forbid!* But let us season their Tender years with the sweet Liqueur of Caelestial Piety, as *St. Chrysostom* says. *David and Bathsheba* both Joyned in the Instructing of their Son *Solomon*. Let us bring them as *Hannah* did *Samuel*, a *Mamma corporali* ad *Spirituallem*, from her Corporal to the Spiritual Breast, that they may thence suck the Sincere Milk of the word, that they

*they may Grow thereby* 1. *Pet.* 2. 2. Let us Teach them the Holy Scriptures from their Childhood, as *Eunice* taught her son *Timothy*. 2 *Tim.* 3. 15.

And this brings me

*Fourthly* and *Lastly*, To lay down the advantages of a Sober, Pious, and early Education. And this will appear partly by Considering how difficult a matter it is, to draw men quite away from those Principles, which they Imbibed in their Youth; the Prejudices of Education detaining many men in those courses, tho' never so contrary to reason and Religion, wherein they were First engaged. By which we see the disadvantages of ill Instructions, when they are distilled into a Youthfull mind, because of the difficulty of Eradicating them thence: so the Benefits of a Pious, and Sober Education are very well known to those who have enjoyed the happiness thereof.

And

And we need not go far for Exam-  
 ples of this Nature; I appeal to every  
 one of you, who in your early Years  
 have been Instructed in the Catechism  
 of the Church of England, whether  
 you have not found vast advantages  
 over those, who were not acquainted  
 with those sound Principles; For  
 when these are Wisely laid, and the  
 uses of them throwly known, they  
 have great Influence on mens Lives  
 and conversations, and do make them  
 sound Believers, and good Christians.  
 So that 'twill be very hard to obtrude  
 on them those dark and Hellish Opi-  
 nions, that appear to unwary men  
 to be vested with the Cloak of Truth.  
 'Twill be Impossible to Blind them so  
 far as that they cannot dismantle those  
 horrid Vices, that wou'd Insinuate  
 themselves in the name, and under the  
 Specious pretext of Virtue. 'Twill  
 not be an easy matter to Lanch them  
 down into the Stream of debauchery;  
 or to draw them away by every emp-  
 ty puff of Doctrine, or to make them

Ob-

Obnoxious to every Enthusiasm and Imposture; but by the light of the Orthodox knowledge, wherewith they were first Imbued, they can soon discover the *Ignis Fatuus*, that would decoy them over some Dangerous Precipice. For as the Kid, that was first Instructed by her Mother, would not open the door to the Wolf tho' he Mimick'd the Goats Voice; if the Sons of the Church of *England* would mind the wholesome Doctrine of the Mother, they'd keep themselves secure enough from those Ravening Wolves, that dayly worry and make Havock of Christ's Flock. 'Twas for want of this Catechising, the Jesuits in the late times of confusion and Anarchy, Splitt us into so many sects and Play'd us one against another even almost to the Destruction of all. And if this Catechising were in greater Esteem among us, and not so much juss'd out to gratify mens itching ears, with more Florid, tho' less Profitable discourses: If Parents would

and prepare them to answer Publicly  
 at the Stated times appointed by the  
 Church for expounding the Cate-  
 chism ; and wou'd also approve of and  
 encourage such Performances by af-  
 fording their own presence, I say if  
 that due care were taken, which an  
 affair of so great Importance required,  
 men who had been thus Educated  
 wou'd not so frequently ramble from  
 the clear and Lucid Fountain of truth  
 to follow the Muddy Streams of er-  
 rour and confusion. Then the Ro-  
 man cause ( I wont say Religion )  
 wou'd not have so many Abettors, and  
 Wellwishers, among those that pre-  
 tend to be *Protestants*. And those  
 bold Blasphemers, who have the Con-  
 fidence in the Face of a Christian Na-  
 tion to explode the Divinity of our  
*Blessed Saviour*, wou'd have long agoe  
 been hissed off the Stage ; it being as  
 absur'd to hope for Salvation by the Sa-  
 tisfaction and Intercession of a meer  
 Creature ( as they account the ever  
 E Bles-



Blessed and adored *Jesus* ) as any Tenent the Church of Rome maintains even in the Midst of all her abominable Corruptions.

If therefore a *Papist* shou'd Insinuate the Worshipping of his Idols, and bring never so many and Specious Arguments to Vindicate his doing so a Boy that has Learned his Catechism and but Tollerably Digested the Sense of it, will be able to confront, if not Baffle such an Imposter, by reciting the *Second Commandment*, which declares how angry God is with those that give his Worship to another.

If a *Deist* comes with his *Ideas*, and his *Reason* against *Revelation*, and wou'd degrade our *Saviour* of his Divinity, an ordinary Proficient in the Catechism may lay before him the Creed, the Belief of those very Apostles that conversed with Christ and saw his Miracles, which were not in the Power of any Created Being, but

required an Almighty God to perform them; it being as easy to Create a Man out of nothing, as to raise him to life again; as our Saviour did *Lazarus* even after he began to putrify.

If a *Quaker* objects his Light within, and Cavils at the external Ordinances of Baptism, and the Lords Supper, one that Remembers his Catechisme, may tell him, that the Principles of the Christian Religion do set down two Sacraments as generally Necessary to Salvation; and that a Sacrament, in the very Nature of the thing, must be some outward, and visible sign of an inward, and Spiritual Grace.

If a *Debauche* entices him to Lewdness or Intemperance, to vice and Immorality; one that Remembers the Catechisme may put him off with Detestation, and tell him, that these are contrary to what he Learned in his Duty towards his Neighbour,

where he is Instruſted keep his body all  
in Temperance, Soberneſs, and Caſtity ran

If the Gayety and Blandiſhments of If  
earthly Glory, ſhou'd tempt him to ſelf, v  
caſt too much of his Love and affection  
tion on them ; he may repeat his Duenjo  
ty towards God, and that will inform Nei  
him, that he muſt Love the Lord wou  
his God with all his Heart, and the and  
God will not admit of any competitor,  
tor, much leſs allow any thing to en by  
joy a greater ſhare of his Love than  
himſelf.

If at any time by affronts or pro and  
vocations he be Stimulated to do h an  
Neighbour an injury, and to be R fin  
venged on him ; by a ſhort Reflect wi  
on on the Branches of his Catechiſ ke  
he will find, that he cannot ſay th Ste  
Lords Prayer without Playing th ſpe  
Hypocrite, and Prevaricating wi  
God, unleſs he forgives thoſe th  
have offended him, as he hopes Go th  
w up

God will forgive him his manifold sins and  
tyranny transgressions.

If an opportunity shou'd offer it  
self, whereby he might privatly cheat,  
and wrong his Neighbour ; is he not  
enjoynd in his Duty towards his  
Neighbour, to do to others as he  
would they shou'd do to himself ;  
and sure he wou'd not be well plea-  
sed, and take it kindly to be defrauded  
by another.

If he has strong Inclinations to ly-  
ing, Stealing, Slandering, Backbiting  
and the like ; He may presently cite  
an admonition to warn him of these  
sins. His duty to his Neighbour  
will remind him, that he ought to  
keep his hands from Picking and  
Stealing, and his Tongue from evil-  
speaking, Lying, and Slandering.

If Rebellious and Factious men  
shou'd go about to entice him to lift  
up his hands privately, or to enter into  
open

open Hostility against his Sovereign  
 He finds this is forbidden in his Duty  
 towards his Neighbour, where he is  
 Instructed to *Love, Honour and obey*  
*the King, and all that are put in Au-*  
*thority under him.*

And thus I might descant on all o-  
 ther Branches of our most excellen-  
 and comprehensive Catechisme : but  
 I hope what I have said will be Suf-  
 ficient to shew the great Advantage  
 of Learning it in our Youth ; it being  
 like a Treasure to which we may  
 have our recourse in any exigencie  
 or on any occasion. And can any  
 Member of the Church of *England*  
 possibly be Backward, or remiss in  
 bestowing this Catholicon, this Uni-  
 versal Antidote against all the Poi-  
 sons that infect the Soul ?

Or can any Children be so Stub-  
 born or Headstrong as to refuse to  
 obey their Parents and observe their  
 dictates, and perform their com-  
 mands.



lands, or murmur at *the Rod and*  
*scourge*; especially when they enjoyn  
 only the Practice of those things,  
 which if duely done, will bring them  
 to Eternal happiness.

But perhaps it may be Objected,  
 that Men with whom all the pains  
 possible has been taken to culti-  
 vate their minds when they were  
 Young, with sound Principles of Re-  
 ligion, and who have had the seeds of  
 Vertue sown betimes in their hearts,  
 yet have afterwards *Started aside like a*  
*broken Bow, and ran astray like a Sheep*  
*that is lost*, and that therefore the ad-  
 vantages of Catechising are not so  
 great, as we pretend? To this I an-  
 swer, that tho' there may be some  
 few Extraordinary instances of this  
 Nature, yet Generally tis not so. The  
 Wise King affirms the Contrary, Prov.  
 22.6. *Train up a Child in the way he should*  
*go, and when he is old he will not depart*  
*from it.* And therefore when we see  
 one, that had an early Education, and  
 was

was instructed in the Catechisme in his youth, pursue irregular and naughty courses, and run quite counter to what he Learned ; we may Suppose that such a Child might have been Taught the grounds of his Religion by rote like a Parrat, without ever having had due application made of them to his understanding, or laying the warm Influences of them home to his Heart. For a Childs memory may be so ripe and Pregnant, that he may learn his prayers and Catechisme before he has sense and Judgement to know, what is the true design or intention of his Learning them. He perhaps thinks of no other Benefit to be acquired thereby, but only by his aptness and readiness in answering, to deserve some applauses from his Parents or Master, to be called a good Boy, and to receive some trifles as an Encouragement. Parents therefore ought to tell their Children, as they grow up to Maturity, the right end and meaning of this Puerill institution

stitution, and never leave informing them till they are thoroughly affected therewith; and are from their very Hearts made sensible of the good there is in performing their Duty, and the Folly and Vanity there is in pursuing Vice; which, if they neglect to do, 'tis no wonder if their Children afterwards deviate from those honest Precepts they were first taught. What is a Man better'd or improved, by remembering the Letters, or the triangular shape of a Mathematical Figure, if he be altogether ignorant of the Demonstration, and the Uses it may be applied to in Navigation, Mechanics, or otherwise.

But *Secondly*, if we suppose one who had not only learned, but for some time also practised his Duty to God and his Neighbour, and could not at first, without vast reluctancies be prevail'd upon to make the least irregular excursion; yet afterwards by great Temptations and Examples gave

loose Reins to his Appetites, and tumbled down headlong from Grace, and launched quite out of his depth, into an Ocean of Sin and Pollution: Yet in some sense the advantages of an early and pious Education, will considerably operate in this case, and will not suffer him wholly to depart from the good way, wherein he was trained up; because such an one will receive severer Stripes from his Conscience than others who were never Instructed in Religion, nor affected with Piety and Virtue. His Conscience in spite of all the Noise and Jollity of his beloved Companions, will sometimes reach him a serious Lecture. and remind him of his Duty, which he has forsaken, and tell him, this is not the way; but that it is quite contrary to what he learned in his Youth. And therefore still there is some Life in him; some hopes of his Conversion. For it is next to impossible, that he should stifle \* the Whispers of his Conscience that

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\* *Stat ratio contra, & secretam gannit in aurem. Pers.*

that the thoughts of Hell and Damnation should not creep into his mind, and represent the Torments thereof in thousand frightful shapes.

We therefore commonly find, that they, who have had a pious Education, tho' they happen to be for some time deluded and led astray; yet, the alarms of their Consciences continually sounding in their Ears, do at length rouse them out of their Lethargy, and tug them by the Elbow, and warn them of their danger, and like *Jonathan* shoot some Arrows on the other side, to intimate, that it is high time to fly, and retract those dangerous Courses they are engag'd in.

May the Great God give us all Grace, to consider how far we have stray'd, and wander'd out of that good way, which we learn'd in our Youth, and as well by our own Example, as the *Rod and Reproof*, endeavour to bring up our Children in the Fear and Nurture



Nurture of the Lord, that they may be a Joy to our Selves, a Comfort to their Friends, a Credit to their Masters, an Ornament to their Families, very useful to the Common-wealth, in which they are Members, and finally made Partakers of Eternal Happiness and Bliss, for the sake of our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

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*F I N I S.*

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*E R R A T A.*

**P**Age 1. l. 7. for *my* r. *may*. p. 5. l. 7. d. ., l. 8. of *their Children*. p. 8. l. 17. for *Will* r. *W*. p. 10. l. 5. dele. *some*. p. 17. l. 17. after *are* r. *like so many Garlands and Flowers to adorn*. p. 1. 5. for *were* r. *where*. p. 29. l. 12. for *if* r. *it*. p. 1. 10. r. *so if the Sons*. p. 36. l. 1. for *Instructed* r. *Instructed to*. p. 39. l. 8. for *his* r. *has*.

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**P**age 1. l. 7. for my many. p. 17. l. 1.  
 of their Children. p. 8. l. 17. for Well.  
 p. 10. l. 5. dele. some. p. 17. l. 17. after are  
 like so many Gardens and. p. 10. l. 10. dele.  
 l. 5. for were 1. where. p. 29. l. 12. for if 1. 1.  
 l. 10. 1. so if the Sons. p. 36. l. 1. for Instru-  
 mented to. p. 39. l. 8. for but, but.